

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 17, 2004. Claims 37 to 51 and 58 to 78 are in the application, of which the following claims have already been allowed: Claims 48 to 51, 61 to 72 and 75 to 78. Of the remaining claims, Claims 37, 40, 43, 58 and 73 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Turning first to a formal matter involving the drawings, Applicants respectfully request approval for the replacement drawing sheets dated June 17, 2004.

Turning to the merits, Applicants thank the Examiner for his indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 46 to 51, 61 to 72 and 75 to 78^{1/}. Page 10 of the Office Action explains the Examiner's Reasons For Allowance. These Reasons are seen to apply only to independent Claims 46, 48, 50, 67, 69 and 71. The remaining independent claims, namely Claims 61, 64, 75 and 77, are not seen to recite the feature of holding a command and transmitting it after completing transmission of reproduction data. The Examiner is respectfully invited to clarify his reasons for allowance if he disagrees.

Based on the indication of allowable subject matter, independent Claim 58 has been amended along the lines of allowable Claim 61, and independent Claim 73 has been amended along the lines of allowable Claim 75. It is therefore respectfully submitted that Claims 58 to 60, 73 and 74 are also in condition for allowance.

^{1/}A minor amendment has been effected to dependent Claim 72, so as to correct its dependency.

Claims 37 to 45, 52 to 60, 73 and 74 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent 5,764,866 (Maniwa) in view of U.S. Patent 5,241,347 (Kodama). In response, Claims 58 and 73 have been amended as described above, Claims 52 to 57 have been cancelled, and Claims 37, 40 and 43 have been amended as described below. These actions have been taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and without conceding the correctness of the rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal are therefore respectfully requested, as detailed more fully below.

Independent Claims 37, 40 and 43 concern an image processing apparatus in which a reader controller transmits image data read by an original-reading unit to an engine controller, and in which a printer controller transmits image data corresponding to printed data received from an external device to the same engine controller. The engine controller controls an image forming unit, which correspondingly has a state signal indicative of a condition of the image forming unit. According to one feature of the invention, there is a selection of the sending destination of the state signal, and the selection is made in accordance with a content of the state signal.

By virtue of the foregoing, the destination of the state signal is selected appropriately, since it is selected in accordance with the content thereof. Such an advantage is evident in the representative embodiment of the invention described in the specification herein. For example, in connection with its description of Figure 7 of the subject application, pages 49 to 52 explain that the state signal is transmitted to at least one of the reader controller 901 and the printer controller 2103 depending on the contents of the change in the state.

On the contrary, Maniwa discloses a digital copier device 4 comprising a controller unit 20 for receiving data from a scanner engine 14 and a workstation 3. However, Maniwa has no mention of a state signal indicating a condition of printer engine 15. As a consequence, since Maniwa does not even mention a state signal, it is not possible for Maniwa to inform those of ordinary skill of a selection of the destination for sending such a state signal, much less a selection based on a content of the state signal.

Page 3 of the Office Action conceded these deficiencies in Maniwa, and asserted that Kodama disclosed selective transmission of a state signal. Applicants respectfully disagree. As Applicants see it, Kodama discloses an image forming apparatus comprising printer controller 201 which receives a state signal of the apparatus from a plurality of sensors such as sensors 44, 60, 203 and 204. Thus, although it is true that Kodama describes a state signal indicative of a printing engine, Kodama's state signal is inputted only to printer controller 201. That is, Kodama does not mention that its printer controller 201 transmits the state signal to any other controller; rather, it appears that printer controller 201 is the sole controller that receives the state signal and acts on it. Since Kodama's printer controller 201 does not transmit the state signal to any other controller, Kodama could not possibly disclose anything concerning a selection of the destination for such a state signal, and most certainly does not disclose or suggest a selection based on the content of the state signal itself.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that Claims 37, 40 and 43 are fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California, office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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